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Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

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Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 18 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

List of issues and questions in relation to the combined fifth and sixth periodic reports of Armenia

Constitutional, legislative and institutional framework

1. In paragraph 14 of its combined fifth and sixth periodic reports (CEDAW/C/ARM/5-6),[1] the State party mentions that the 2012-2016 Strategic Programme for Legal and Judicial Reforms has been adopted and provides for wide-ranging activities covering judicial, penitentiary and criminal legislation, as well as all the laws relating to women's human rights. Please provide updated information on any new legislation adopted in the area of protection of women's human rights in this context, as well as information on whether non-governmental and civil society organizations working on those rights were involved in the process of preparation of the report.

2. The State party indicates that different strategies and policies relating to women's rights have been elaborated, such as a gender policy concept paper (para. 19), a gender policy strategic programme for 2011-2015 and a gender policy action plan for 2011 (para. 20), a methodological guide on ensuring gender equality at the community levels (para. 21) and a 2011-2015 strategic action plan to combat gender-based violence (para. 70). Please provide updated information on the implementation of those strategies and policies, whether adequate financial resources are allocated for their implementation and whether any assessment of impact has been conducted. Please also provide information about any other relevant strategies and policies adopted in the area of women's rights.

Note: The present document is being circulated in English, French and Spanish only.

[1] Unless otherwise indicated, paragraph numbers refer to the combined fifth and sixth periodic reports of Armenia.

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Access to justice and legal complaint mechanisms

3. The State party indicates that the Office of the Human Rights Defender employs an adviser to the Defender on women's issues (para. 3). Please provide detailed information on the mandate and human and financial resources of that adviser. Please also provide information on the individual complaint procedure to report violations of women's rights, the number of complaints that have been received and addressed, and whether the Convention is used in the investigations.

National machinery for the advancement of women

4. The State party indicates that there is a project to transform the Women's Council into a national mechanism for the implementation of the gender policy (para. 3). Please provide updated information on the outcome of the project, indicating its mandate and the budget and human resources that are planned. Please also provide information on the cooperation of the Council with women's civil society organizations and the Office of the Human Rights Defender.

Temporary special measures

5. The adoption of temporary special measures in the State party is referred to in paragraph 44, but concrete examples are not provided. Please provide specific examples of such measures, their inclusion in national policies and programmes and their concrete implementation, with a view to promoting and accelerating the realization of substantive equality between women and men, in line with the Committee's general recommendation No. 25 (2004) on temporary special measures.

Stereotypes

6. The State party acknowledges the persistence of gender stereotypes and provides some information on measures taken to improve the situation, in particular with regard to overcoming those stereotypes in the media and in educational programmes (paras. 45 and 46). Please provide information on the existence of clear policies and programmes for eradicating gender stereotypes, the implementation and the monitoring of existing policies and programmes, and any other measures taken since the submission of the combined report. Please also provide information on measures taken to counter stereotypical attitudes towards women and girls, who experience multiple forms of discrimination on account of their ethnicity, age or disability, for being lesbian, bisexual, transgender or intersex women and girls, or for any other characteristic.

Violence against women

7. Please indicate whether the State party has comprehensive legislation covering all forms of violence against women. While it is indicated in paragraph 50 of the combined report that a draft law on domestic violence has been submitted to the Government, no information is provided on the time frame for its enactment, its current status and its content. Please provide information on the current situation with regard to shelters currently available to women who are victims of all forms of violence, including domestic violence, in all regions. Please also provide information on the outcome of the research conducted in the framework of the programme for improving the quality of service rendered to women who are victims

of domestic violence in Armenia mentioned in paragraph 51, as well as the action plan developed on its basis.

Trafficking and exploitation of prostitution

8. The State party indicates that the fourth national programme on combating human trafficking (2013-2015) was approved in 2013 (para. 53). It also indicates that the police have prepared a draft law on the identification of and support to persons subjected to trafficking or exploitation (para. 55). Please provide information on the current status and content of and time frame for the adoption of the draft law, as well as on whether the national programme on combating human trafficking has been evaluated, what the outcome has been and whether it has been extended. Please indicate whether the administrative penalty imposed on women engaged in prostitution has been abolished and provide information and data disaggregated by age and ethnicity on the exploitation of prostitution.

Participation in political and public life

9. The State party provides information on gender-sensitive quotas aimed at increasing women's representation in the National Assembly to at least 20 per cent (para. 58). The data provided indicate that women remain underrepresented in decision-making positions, especially in the judiciary (45 of 213 judges and 3 of 13 members of the Council of Justice are women) (para. 13) and in the diplomatic service (only three women are ambassadors) (para. 63). Please provide information on specific measures taken to increase the representation of women in all decision-making and legislative bodies, especially in the judiciary and the diplomatic service. Please also provide information on the proportion of women in the National Assembly and in local self-government bodies, including regional authorities.

Education

10. The State party reported that, between 2007 and 2012, the number of pregnancies among girls of 15 to 17 years of age had peaked in 2011, with 169 cases of pregnancies, which, for most, had resulted in childbirth (para. 91). Please provide data on dropout rates and information on measures taken to ensure that adolescent mothers return to school after childbirth at the level at which they had left. Please also provide information on whether any gender analysis and revision of educational materials have been conducted and whether school curricula include age-appropriate information on sexual and reproductive health and rights. Please further provide information on whether the State party guarantees inclusive and accessible education for girls with disabilities, including in rural areas, and provides training for teachers on the special needs of those girls. Please provide information on the situation of girls dropping out of school owing to the cultural and religious practices of the ethnic and religious minorities living in the State party (in particular the Yazidis, and the Molokans).

Employment

11. The State party acknowledges that women constitute 73.4 per cent of the total number of unemployed people (para. 71). According to information before the Committee, there is a wide gender pay gap in different sectors and persistent vertical and horizontal segregation. Please provide updated information on measures

taken to address the horizontal and vertical segregation between men and women, which results, inter alia, in the gender pay gap. Please also provide information on the availability and affordability of childcare facilities to allow women to reconcile work and family life.

12. The report is silent on the issue of sexual harassment in the workplace. Please provide detailed information on specific legislation prohibiting such harassment, as well as whether there are mechanisms in place for women to report incidents in a confidential manner. Please also provide information on data collected to assess the extent of the problem and to identify gaps in the legal framework in this regard. Please explain to what extent the reversal of the burden of proof is applied to protect the rights of women who are victims of discrimination and of sexual harassment in the workplace.

Health

13. The State party indicates that only 33 per cent of women in urban areas and 19 per cent of rural women use modern contraceptive methods (para. 94). According to information before the Committee, the rate of abortion is high and abortion is used as a family planning method. Please provide information on measures taken by the State party to increase awareness among women and girls of the availability of modern contraceptive methods and to facilitate the access of women and girls to sexual and reproductive health and services.

14. According to information before the Committee, there is a lack of neonatologists and anaesthesiologists in some regions, compounded by a lack of high-quality drugs in maternity centres, which has an impact on the rate of maternal and child mortality. Please provide information on measures taken to improve maternal health care.

15. The State party indicates that the majority of women living with HIV are in the active reproductive stage of their lives and that the cause of infection is indirectly linked to poverty and migration (para. 99). According to information before the Committee, there are negative social attitudes and discriminatory practices against pregnant women living with HIV. Please provide information on studies undertaken to identify the causes of HIV infection among women and an evaluation of the extent of the problem. Please also provide information on measures taken to adopt specific legislation and strategies to protect HIV-positive women from discrimination and to address the stigmatization and discrimination that they suffer from and violence targeted at them. Please further provide information on measures taken to prevent the mother-to-child transmission of HIV and to ensure effective access to medical services by women and girls living with HIV, as well as steps taken to protect them from stigmatization, discrimination and violence.

Women with disabilities

16. The State party acknowledges that numerous challenges impede the full social integration of persons with disabilities, in particular in the areas of education and employment (para. 30). It also indicates that the draft law on the protection of the rights of persons with disabilities and their social inclusion has been submitted to the Government (para. 25). Please provide information on the current status and content of the draft law, as well as information on how the State party incorporates the specific needs of women and girls with disabilities into policies and programmes

aimed at the advancement and protection of women's rights in all areas covered by the Convention. Please also provide information on measures taken to prevent violence, in particular sexual violence, against women and girls with disabilities in institutions, in the community and at home, and to protect them from such violence.

Rural women

17. The State party indicates that 57.1 per cent of all employed women work in agriculture and describes some measures taken to improve their situation (paras. 111-114). Please provide information on the monitoring and assessment of those measures and on the outcome of that evaluation. Please also provide information on the measures taken to increase the participation of rural women in political and public life, enhance their access to justice, provide them with protection, support and assistance when they are subjected to gender-based violence, and ensure their access to health-care services, employment and economic opportunities, in line with the Committee's general recommendation No. 34 (2016) on the rights of rural women.

Refugees and asylum-seeking women

18. The State party indicates that the specific needs of women asylum seekers are taken into account when placing them in temporary reception centres (para. 33). According to information before the Committee, those centres lack the capacity required to cope with the emerging reception needs and do not provide separate and safe accommodation to female asylum seekers or protection from sexual and gender-based violence. Please provide updated information on the current living conditions of refugee and asylum-seeking women, in particular in relation to housing, food security, protection against violence and access to justice, as well as on their access to health services, education and employment.